



NEBRASKA CONSOLIDATED STATE PLAN

IMPROVING AMERICA'S SCHOOL ACT (IASA) TITLE I – HELPING DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN REACH HIGH STANDARDS

**May 1996
Addendums added December 1997**

**IASA – Title I
Nebraska Department of Education
301 Centennial Mall South
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to the State of Nebraska	3
Goals, Standards and Assessments and Performance Indicators	
• Goals	4
• Performance Standards and Assessments	6
• Performance Indicators	8
Strategies, Activities and Use of Resources	
• Strategies and Activities	10
• Use of Resources.....	16
• Waivers	18
Continuous Improvement.....	18
Maintaining Public Involvement	19
Fiscal Accountability	
• State-level Activities.....	20
• Non-formula Programs	21
• State Administration	24
Equitable Access and Participation.....	24
Addendum.....	26
• Title I Transitional Assessment Plan	

INTRODUCTION

Among the 50 states, Nebraska ranks fifteenth in area (over 77,000 square miles) but only thirty-eighth in population (approximately 1.6 million residents). Nebraska's educational system divided the state's 93 counties into 680 school districts serving 285,842 students in 1994-95. The three largest school districts (Omaha, Lincoln and Millard) enrolled 32% of these students. Only 40 of the state's school districts (4%) had enrollments of more than 1,000 students. Of the smaller districts, 240 had fewer than 20 students and rank among the smallest in the nation, including 64 "one-room school" districts with a single teacher. Nineteen regional Educational Service Units (ESUs) provide a wide variety of services to these school districts. The largest ESU serves 106 school districts and private systems in an area that includes 11 counties.

The adoption of *High Performance Learning: A Model for Redesigning Education for All Nebraska Students* by the State Board of Education in 1991 initiated a concerted collaborative effort between the Nebraska Department of Education, regional ESUs and local school districts to improve schools. (See Appendix A.) Building on a foundation of parent, family and community involvement and support, high performance learning focuses school improvement on quality learning, accountability and equity for all students. The *High Performance Learning Model* serves as an overarching umbrella for state and local initiatives and activities including accreditation; Nebraska 2000: Educate America Act; development of curriculum frameworks in academic and vocational areas; the development of early childhood programs and services; and school improvement efforts in programs in the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA).

The enactment of IASA afforded new opportunities for integration of programs and services at both the State and local levels. This Consolidated State Plan represents:

- Title I, Part A of the IASA (LEA Program)
- Title I, Part B of the IASA (Even Start Program)
- Title I, Part C of the IASA (Migrant Education)
- Title I, Part D of the IASA (Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk Children), and
- Subtitle B of Title VII of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act.

The integration and collaboration proposed in this plan build on the foundation created in the Preliminary Title Consolidated Plan for Nebraska (May 1995) and extend beyond these programs at both State and local levels to support ongoing efforts at improving schools by focusing on challenging academic standards for all students.

Empowering people at all levels to become part of the process in designing, implementing and evaluating the integrating activities is a central concept to the new IASA and it is our intention to provide maximum support for that concept. To accomplish this goal, many processes involved in these IASA programs need to be reinvented by the participants. Task forces and committees have begun reinventing the processes to provide greater flexibility in meeting program and student needs. Intensive training and guidance will continue to be provided by the State Educational Agency (SEA) and other agencies to ensure a coordinated effort at providing more appropriate services to children based on high standards. Empowering people means holding them

accountable which allows programs to be operated with the least amount of burdensome and regulatory oversight.

GOALS, STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS and PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Goals

State Goals. In *Nebraska 2000: A Blueprint for Achieving Quality Education for All Students* and High Performance Learning, the mission for the schools of the state is:

...to provide quality learning for every student. In addition, both the state and local schools must be accountable for doing the things that promote quality learning for every student and be accountable for achieving the results for every student.

Quality or high performance learning implies that there is a level of performance beyond learning in language arts, math, science and social studies or certain levels of reading and writing. High performance learning identifies eight domains of performance outcomes for student learning: basic skills and literacies; problem solving; creative thinking and expression; higher order thinking skills; life-long learning; work-entry skills; motivation/disposition to learn; and citizenship/social/democratic values and skills. The mission and goals of the *High Performance Learning Model* are summarized as:

- Schools are responsible and accountable for providing all students access to the opportunities for quality learning.
- Schools are responsible and accountable for all students achieving high performance learning outcomes; and
- Schools are responsible and accountable for ensuring that there is equity for all students in both access and outcomes.

In the spring of 1996, the Nebraska 2000: Educate America Act's State Panel defined broad educational goals for the state. These goals, submitted in the Goals 2000 Application for Second Year Funding, are:

1. Listen, speak, read and write competently.
2. Learn and apply mathematical, scientific and technological principles and systems to life.
3. Learn and apply knowledge of the past to understand the present and plan for the future.
4. Think and express creatively and respond to the creative works of others.
5. Be able to make informed consumer choices.
6. Exhibit the knowledge, skills and responsibility needed in the workplace.
7. Access, organize and analyze information.
8. Understand the human body and maintain healthy habits.
9. Think analytically, solve problems and make decisions.
10. Participate informatively in the democratic process.
11. Understand the culturally diverse and interdependent world.

12. Practice self-directed learning.

The Nebraska Department of Education, in conjunction with local school administrators and teachers and staff from higher education, has facilitated the development of curriculum frameworks in the areas of Math, Science, Social Studies, Foreign Languages, Vocational Education and Applied Technology, the Visual and Performing Arts and an interdisciplinary framework for kindergarten and preprimary programs. The State Panel of Nebraska 2000 and educators from across the state are developing content standards for Reading/Language Arts and each of the content areas listed above.

Timelines have been established for the Nebraska 2000 State Panel to complete the development of the educational goals and content/skills/application standards, present them for input and review by citizen groups throughout the state during the summer of 1996 and bring them to the State Board of Education by the fall of 1996. These standards should be available and presented to the school districts by the start of the 1997-98 school year.

On June 7, 1996, the State Board of Education authorized the Commissioner to employ a reading consultant for the Department of Education. The specified duties for this new position include coordinating the implementation of the reading/writing policy, development of reading frameworks and development of reading/writing standards to programs through the Statewide School Support System.

Program Goals. The High Performance Learning model's goals and mission are based on: quality learning, equity and accountability of students, schools, communities and families through professional development and continuous school improvement. To ensure that the educational needs of the children who benefit from the federal programs included in this consolidated plan are supported in these components of High Performance Learning and the Nebraska 2000 plan, six (6) programs goals have been defined:

- Goal I. To provide a concentrated focus on helping all children achieve challenging academic standards.
- Goal II. To assure access to equal educational opportunities for all children and youth.
- Goal III. To provide more coordination and less fragmentation of services for children and families.
- Goal IV. To provide integration and coordination of support for professional development and school improvement activities.
- Goal V. To reduce the burdensome paperwork associated with multiple plans.
- Goal VI. To empower participants at all levels to be involved in developing the processes and holding them accountable for results.

The chart on page 4 shows show the goals, strategies and activities support the state’s reform efforts.

Performance Standards and Assessments

In the absence of completed statewide content and performance standards and statewide assessments, the transitional assessment plan for Title I, Part A presented in the Preliminary Title Consolidated Plan (May, 1995) will be used.

Components of the High Performance Learning Model			
	Quality Learning	Equity	Accountability
Consolidated Plan Goals, Strategies and Activities	Goal I. A concentrated focus on helping all children achieve challenging academic standards.	Goal II. Assure access to equal educational opportunities for children and youth.	Goal IV. Empower participants to develop the processes and hold them accountable for results.
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on high expectations for all children • Schoolwide conferences and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on a sensitivity to the diverse needs of children and youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support development of statewide assessments • Integrated conferences for staff and parents
School Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in development and provide support for content and performance standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible and extended times and locations for learning and service • Early intervention services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Program Reviews—integrated programs supporting local school improvement efforts
Coordination & Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of services through joint planning • Schoolwide networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to technology • Schoolwide projects • Quality Program Reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and school partnerships • Schoolwide projects
Families and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuity in capacity building opportunities for parents, families and caregivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-service opportunities on providing family centered services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizenship and responsibility through integrated efforts with community groups

The Transitional Assessment Plan, developed by the Title I Evaluation Task Force of local regional (ESU) program directors, teachers and building administrators, will be used until the State of Nebraska as developed or adopted statewide content and performance standards and assessments. The Title I Evaluation Task Force will continue to study and develop alternative assessment procedures and standards in reading/language arts and math or Title I programs in the event that statewide measures are not in place by the timelines prescribed in Section 1111 of the

Improving America's Schools Act. In addition, the SEA staff will continue to work with the staff of Nebraska 2000: Educate America Act on developing statewide standards and assessments. Title I and Nebraska 2000 staff have been designated to work with the Region VII Comprehensive Assistance Center staff on statewide assessments for the standards being developed.

Transitional Assessment Plan. To ensure that students served in Title I programs are taught the same knowledge and skills and help to the same expectations as all children, each school district must use the academic standards, learner outcomes, or written curriculum used to satisfy the accreditation requirements of Regulations and Procedures for Legal Operation of School in Nebraska (Rule 10) for the content standards of their Title I program.

Rule 10 requires each school district to select and use a standardized norm-referenced achievement test. An assessment must be conducted annually in at least one grade in each of the following three levels: grades 4-6, grades 7-9 and grades 10-12. All students in the grades selected are tested in all subject areas including reading/language arts and math.

All Title I programs must describe in their Title I School District Plan the:

- content standards used for all children in the district,
- the grade level selected by the district for the annual assessment, and
- the name of the norm-referenced standardized achievement test used by the district.

Levels of performance (partially proficient or emerging, proficient and advanced) are defined by each school district in their Title I School District Plan. The determination of adequate progress for yearly performance in each district shall be a reduction in the percentage of the student population performing at the emerging level in the selected grade intervals as described in Section 1111 of IASA.

The Title I School District Plan requires each project to describe the content standards used for all children in the district, the grade levels selected by the district for the annual assessment, a definition of emerging, proficient and advanced levels of performance based on the standardized achievement tests and the name of the norm-referenced standardized achievement test used by the district. In addition, the district is asked to describe additional performance indicators, if any, that will use "to (a) determine student progress, (b) assist in diagnosis, teaching and learning, (c) determine necessary project revisions." These components of the Title I School District are reviewed by the SEA staff during the application and plan approval process.

The criteria used to identify schools (building level) as being in need of school improvement for the Transitional Assessment Plan include the results of the assessment of performance. The school district determines if the percentage of the population at the designated grade level performing at or below the emerging level has decreased annually in the areas of reading/language arts and mathematics. Targeted assisted schools have the option to include in this population only the children served in Title I or all students at that grade level. For private schools, the assessment includes only the performance of the children receiving Title I services.

The criteria used to identify school districts (district level) as being in need of school improvement include the performance results of each building and any other performance indicators defined in the Title I School District Plan. In Nebraska, only 15% of the school districts operating Title I programs have multiple attendance centers. So for the majority of the projects, the building level and the district level school improvement procedures and requirements are the same.

The Title I Evaluation Task Force has recommended and the Committee of Practitioners has reviewed guidance relative to the number of students (10 or more) that must be included in the performance assessment to be considered statistically sufficient to reflect actual performance for the building and used for determining the need for school improvement. Pending the final analysis of the initial year's statewide data, the SEA has reserved the right to seek additional assistance from the Task Force and the Committee of Practitioners regarding this guidance should these results inappropriately affect the number of buildings to be considered for school improvement.

The Title I Evaluation Task Force is currently exploring options for other performance indicators to include in the Title I Annual Performance Report to measure the effectiveness of practices and programs that support high academic achievement for all children. The programs and practices to be evaluated annually would include professional development, parent involvement, coordination of services and program participation and design for targeted assistance schools and schoolwide projects as defined by each district in its Title I School District Plan. Task Force members feel strongly that such practices and programs are essential contributing factors to the academic success and achievement of children served in the Title I program and a more formal evaluation is necessary to determine needed project revisions. As part of the Statewide School Support System, the Task Force will design a rubric for assessing the progress made by each school district in implementing these components of the Title I School District Plan. Once the rubric is finalized, the results of the self-evaluation for each district will be collected each spring as part of the Title I Annual Performance Report and used as part of the criteria for the identification of the need for improvement at the school district level.

In the 1994-95 school year in Nebraska, there were 60 languages other than English spoken by students in the state. Eighty-eight school districts reported a total of 4,317 Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, a growth of 243.4% over the last five years. Standardized achievement norm-referenced test instruments in other languages are not available. When the statewide assessments for the Nebraska content and performance standards are developed, these tests should include versions in other languages, particularly Spanish and Vietnamese, as these are the most widely spoken other languages in the state.

Performance Indicators

Goals and Performance Indicators for Professional Development, for Safe and Drug-Free Schools and for Children Who Benefit from Federal Programs

Performance indicators have been developed for each of the program goals in this consolidated state plan. Progress on attaining these goals will be assessed annually. Although this plan does

not include Title II and Title IV, the strategies and activities to help the programs attain these goals involve both professional development and safe and drug-free schools programs.

Goal I. To provide a concentrated focus on helping all children achieve challenging academic standards.

Performance Indicator: Using the Transitional Assessment Plan, the percentage of school buildings reporting a decrease in the percentage of the student population performing at the emerging level of performance will increase annually starting in the 1996-97 school year. (To be amended when statewide assessments are in place.)

Goal II. To assure access to equal educational opportunities for all children and youth.

Performance Indicator: The number of schools, school districts and non-profit organizations providing programs and services in flexible times and locations to increase the educational opportunities to children and families served by these programs (educationally disadvantaged, migrant, neglected or delinquent, homeless and other populations with special needs) will increase annually as reported in the program applications, plans and progress reports.

Goal III. To provide more coordination and less fragmentation of services for children and families.

Performance Indicator: The percentage of programs supporting coordinated activities for children and families will increase annually as reported in the plans and applications for all the programs.

Goal IV. To provide integration and coordination of support for professional development and school improvement activities.

Performance Indicator: 100% of the school districts operating Title programs will participate in a Quality Program Review at least once within the authorization of IASA.

Goal V. To reduce the burdensome paperwork associated with multiple programs.

Performance Indicator: The SEA, in conjunction with representatives of the local school districts, will consolidate application and reporting processes, including encouraging school districts to submit consolidated plans, for federal programs starting with the 1996-97 school year.

Goal VI. To empower participants at all levels to be involved in developing the processes and holding them accountable for results.

Performance Indicator: Program participants at the state, district and school levels will be involved in developing and supporting activities and strategies in this final consolidated plan that allow flexibility to meet established standards for performance in student achievement and program effectiveness. (Started in 1995-96 school year.)

STRATEGIES, ACTIVITIES AND USE OF RESOURCES

Strategies and Activities

Introduction. The strategies and activities to accomplish the goals of this consolidated state plan were developed collaboratively by representatives of the Committees of Practitioners and Advisory Groups of all the IASA programs included in this plan. The strategies and activities are integrated for all programs or are program specific as indicated under each goal. (To demonstrate that they relate to the topics listed in the guidance given (Final Consolidated State Plan Section 14302 of ESEA), each area is abbreviated (see parenthesis) and then listed after each strategy and activity.)

1. Provide a safe and drug-free school environment (*safe and drug-free*);
2. Support all teachers in benefiting from high-quality professional development that enables them to teach effectively to challenging content standards (*professional development*) and in which educational technology supports effective teaching and learning (*technology*);
3. Support schoolwide programs under Section 1114 of ESEA (*schoolwide*);
4. Identify and remove state and district barriers to effective schoolwide change (*barriers to change*), including the fragmentation of federal programs and lack of adequate school-level decision-making (*school-level decision-making*);
5. Increase parental and community involvement (*family and community*);
6. Encourage consolidated application and reporting processes on state and federal levels (*consolidation*);
7. Provide technical assistance to LEAs and schools on teaching and learning and hold them accountable for the performance of their students (*technical assistance*).

Goal I. To provide a concentrated focus on helping all children achieve challenging academic standards.

Integrated for All Programs

1. The SEA and representatives of all programs will participate in and support the development of content and performance standards and assessments for the state (Started in 1995). (*professional development, technical assistance*)
2. After the standards are presented to the school districts (proposed by fall of 1997), the programs will support and provide professional development opportunities to assist schools and school districts in implementing the state educational goals and standards. School districts and nonprofits will also be encouraged to involve staff from higher education at the local level in the development of teaching and learning strategies to implement the standards. (*professional development, technical assistance*)
3. The programs will provide and support professional development activities that assist teachers and paraprofessionals to focus on high expectations for all children served by the participating federal programs. A Task Force will begin developing a reference document on professional development. (*professional development*)

4. All school districts and nonprofits will be encouraged to establish a continuum of services for parents and families and to provide family friendly practices such as year-round services. Assistance will be available to schools and school districts through the Nebraska Department of Education Early Childhood Training Center and the SEA. (*family and community, barriers to change*)
5. The Schoolwide Network, established in the Nebraska Title Preliminary Consolidated State Plan, will be used to provide support and collaboration among existing projects and to encourage and assist all eligible schools in planning. The SEA will provide annual regional conferences for schools operating schoolwide projects or in the planning phase. (schoolwide projects)

Specific Programs

Title I, Part C: Migrant Education

1. Migrant programs will identify and utilize interstate and intrastate personnel specifically trained for special needs children (distance learning, P.A.S.S., etc.)
2. The SEA will disseminate and support training for appropriate assessment procedures for special populations.
3. Technology, as it is available at each site, will be utilized for staff, students and hopefully, families with an opportunity to link to agri-business, the family's employer.
4. Technical assistance will include intrastate and interstate in-service and workshops to address needs as assessed by project sites. A Nebraska Migrant Resource Center will be available for materials and limited training of personnel (recruiters). A Nebraska Leadership Academy, an agri-business education partnership, will be available.
5. The SEA will support professional development to enhance teacher's abilities to provide for special needs through selecting specific workshop trainers and motivating parents to participate.

Subtitle B of Title VII of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act

1. Subgrants to school districts for the development of programs which address the educational, physical, social and psychological needs of homeless children and youth will annually be approved and administered.
2. Each year, school districts will be encouraged to include preschool services when applying for homeless assistance grants.

Goal II. To assure access to equal educational opportunities for all children and youth.

Integrated for All Programs

1. The SEA will encourage schools, school districts and nonprofits to provide a variety of options for flexible times and locations for programs and services such as collaborative summer and multi-age before and after school care and education programs. (*school-level decision-making, consolidation*)
2. School districts will be encouraged to consider community partnerships such as opening school libraries and media centers to the community as a location where families can avail these resources at their convenience. The SEA will lead a Task Force of local school support team members in developing a reference document describing "best practices", models, resources, etc. (*family and community, technical assistance, barriers to change*)

3. Schools and school districts will be encouraged to consider options that focus on early intervention and opportunities such as preprimary programs and extending kindergarten to full day services that are connected to before and after school care and education. Schoolwide projects must include preschool needs in their planning activities. (*school-level decision-making, schoolwides*)
4. Programs will support training of staff, families and caregivers in using technology so that children served by these programs will have equal access to educational opportunities available through technology. School districts will be encouraged to incorporate the federal programs in the technology plans developed for the Nebraska 2000 Technology Plan. (*professional development, family and community, technology*)
5. School districts will be encouraged to include community groups in the needs assessments for consolidated planning and for schoolwide projects. In conjunction with local safe and drug-free programs, collaborative activities with neighborhood associations, youth groups and other community groups will be encouraged. These activities should focus on citizenship and being responsible. (*family and community, schoolwides, safe and drug-free schools*)
6. The SEA will assist schools in planning schoolwide projects to ensure a focus on strategies to raise the achievement of all students in reaching the state standards. The SEA will promote and support regional and national schoolwide conferences. (*schoolwides, technical assistance*)

Specific Programs

Title I – Part C: Migrant Education

1. Coordination for the highly mobile students shall include availability of educational programs as needed. Students shall have access to age-appropriate, challenging academic standards through maximum program coordination with all available resources. Migrant programs will be encouraged to coordinate with Head Start, ESL projects, Even Start, Adult Basic Education, School-to-Work, etc.
2. Secondary credit and accrual will be promoted on an interstate and intrastate basis to increase the graduation rate and set role models in the family for preschoolers.
3. Agri-business partnerships will be promoted to provide educational opportunities at work sites and to provide challenging day care centers.
4. Each project site will review educational processes for preschool opportunities and collaborate assistance provided for mobile students.
5. Recruiters for each project area site will perform services and “act as” the necessary connection between the school, family and agri-business community.

Title I – Part D: Neglected, Delinquent or At-Risk

1. An interagency agreement promoting recommended practices for the transition of previously adjudicated or hospitalized youth will be finalized and disseminated during the 1996-97 school year.
2. An interagency council will be formed to meet regularly to share information and address problems of neglected and delinquent or at-risk youth.

Subtitle B of Title VII of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act

1. The Homeless Children’s Advisory Committee, the NDE Homeless Task Force and the Governor’s Nebraska Interagency Council on the Homeless will meet regularly

- during the reauthorization period to share information and address the needs of homeless children and youth.
2. Strategies to remove State level barriers to the enrollment and success of homeless children and youth will continually be pursued through legislation or other means.
 3. School districts will be assisted in reviewing and revising policies that act as barriers to homeless children and youth.
 4. By 1997, the McKinney Act requirements will be included on the Nebraska Department of Education homepage on the World Wide Web.

Goal III. To provide more coordination and less fragmentation of services for children and families.

Note: Although coordination of programs and services is a part of all the goals and strategies in the consolidated plan, Nebraska has decided to continue identifying specific goals and activities to concentrate efforts in this area.

Integrated for All Programs

1. School districts and nonprofits will be encouraged to combine parent advisory groups associated with these federal programs with existing councils and advisory groups. Whenever possible, the schools will be encouraged to be participants in community-side groups that address the needs of families of program participants. *(family and community, barriers to change)*
2. Collaborative programs with Head Start, Even Start, Migrant, Homeless and Title I will be encouraged at the preprimary level to increase the opportunities available for children. Schools and school districts in Nebraska have an option to operate Early Childhood Combination Programs—co-funded preschools that can include Special Education and other programs or grants. *(consolidation, school-level decision-making)*
3. Whenever possible, school districts and schools will be encouraged to provide continuity in services to parents and families through coordinated parent and family involvement opportunities and through maintaining a commitment to follow parents through the various programs. These opportunities should be made available at times and in locations and languages that are appropriate and accessible for the participants. *(family and community)*
4. Programs will be encouraged to provide training to teachers and paraprofessionals in the concepts and importance of family-centered services. A Task Force will develop guidance to assist schools district staff. *(professional development)*
5. Parent and family capacity building opportunities should focus on helping families become self-sufficient and responsible. Schools and school districts are encouraged to work closely with regional and local consortia, councils and groups providing activities through the safe and drug-free schools programs so that children served will benefit. *(professional development, safe and drug-free schools)*
6. Starting in the 1996-97 school year, the Committees of Practitioners for Title I Parts A, B, C, D and the Advisory Committee for Homeless Education will be combined into a single IASA Consolidated Advisory Group. Migrant programs will be represented on the consolidated group while maintaining their own Committee of Practitioners due to its unique role and responsibilities. *(consolidation)*

Specific Programs

Title I – Part A: Basic Programs

1. The annual Parent Involvement Conference will be expanded to include parents of participants in all programs.

Title I – Part C: Migrant Education

1. All applications for program funds will describe their coordination efforts to serve migrant children, increase school attendance and/or completion of the secondary program.
2. Each project site will maintain an effective advisory council that includes intergovernmental agencies and agri-business leaders.
3. Project site services will be coordinated specifically on the intrastate and interstate level. Project site coordination models will be disseminated.
4. The SEA will encourage state and national conference participation, specifically for interstate coordination.
5. Teamwork training for project site staff to encourage program coordination will include selected nationally validated projects National Diffusion Network (NDN) as models.

Subtitle B of Title VII of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act

1. School district projects for homeless students will annually be required to demonstrate coordination with local homeless service providers.
2. Each year, statewide activities for homeless children will be coordinated with the State Department of Education School Lunch Program, the Department of Health and the Department of Social Services.
3. School districts will be encouraged to identify and serve homeless children within their Title I programs.

Goal IV. To provide integration and coordination of support for professional development and school improvement activities.

Integrated for All Programs

1. Professional development opportunities supported by the programs should be focused on providing continuity and sustained assistance through use of a trainer of trainers model. Models of “best practices” will be included in the reference document on professional development. (*professional development*)
2. the reference document (see #1) will promote professional development that is tied to measured competencies such as teacher appraisal, content and performance standards, and the mission of the school district (*professional development*)
3. All programs will use their Quality Program Reviews to identify the professional development and school improvement needs. Follow-up recommendations are required as part of the written report in this process. (*professional development*)
4. As members of the School Improvement Partnership Team in the Department of Education, the programs will work to identify and remove barriers to effective schoolwide change and to coordinate and align all school improvement activities throughout the state. (*consolidation, barriers to change*)

Specific Programs

Title I – Part B: EvenStart

1. Programs serving children in the early childhood period (birth to age 8) will be encouraged to provide/participate in collaborate training initiatives. This training may be coordinated/supported/brokered through the NDE Early Childhood Training Center (See Appendix C).

Title I – Part C: Migrant Education

1. Professional development on-site and off-site training activities will be coordinated with the basic school improvement activities. Additionally, specific program needs for the migrant populations will be addressed through the CAIR and MECCA Consortium activities as funded through §1308 Part C – Migrant Education funds.

Title I – Part D: Neglected, Delinquent or At-Risk

1. The state and local agencies serving neglected, delinquent, or at-risk youth will participate in the Quality Program Reviews.
2. Professional development opportunities will be coordinated and shared between state agencies and local school district programs.

Subtitle B of Title VII of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act

1. Informational materials and training to develop awareness and sensitivity of the special educational needs of homeless children will be provided annually to all school district staff and homeless shelter staff.
2. By 1998, a new Homeless Family Resource Guide will be developed and disseminated to school districts.

Goal V. To reduce the burdensome paperwork associated with multiple programs.

Integrated for All Programs

1. The SEA and program representatives will provide assistance and guidance to local school districts wishing to develop consolidated school district plan. (*consolidation*)
2. The Quality Program Review process provides each school district the option to integrate their federal program review with the district's accreditation/evaluation for school improvement efforts. (*consolidation*)
3. The SEA will consolidate the application and reporting processes for all federal and state programs. (*consolidation*)

Goal VI. To empower participants at all levels to be involved in developing the processes and holding them accountable for results.

Integrated for All Programs

1. Starting in the 1996-97 school year, the SEA, through the Statewide School Support System, will involve participants from all programs in various Task Forces to develop processes and guidance to assist schools and school districts in carrying out the strategies and activities in this plan. (*barriers to change, technical assistance*)
2. The Quality Program Reviews will be evaluated annually to determine the impact on all programs in helping participants access services, improve student achievement, coordinate professional development activities and integrate school improvement efforts. (*barriers to change, professional development*)

Specific Programs

Title I – Part A: Basic Programs

1. The Annual Performance Report will include an evaluation by each school district of the progress in implementing the school district plan. A Task Force will be convened to design a rubric for assessing the effectiveness of the school district plan.

Subtitle B of Title VII of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act

1. Applications, annual reports and monitoring data from school district homeless projects will be analyzed to ensure that services are provided to meet the special needs of homeless children and youth.

Use of Resources

Consistent with the requirements of each program included in this plan, the resources available through these IASA programs will be used to support state and local efforts to carry out these strategies and activities in support of the state's reform efforts. The Statewide School Support System, initiated in the Nebraska Preliminary Consolidated State Plan, will provide the framework for integrating resources and activities to implement the goals, strategies and activities presented in this plan.

At the SEA. The programs will work with other IASA programs to define the professional development assistance needed from the Regional Comprehensive Technical Assistance Center.

The Nebraska Department of Education will include these programs and Nebraska 2000: Educate America Act, Nebraska 2000: Technology and School-to-Work initiatives into a comprehensive school improvement long-range plan.

The SEA will continue to provide leadership and support to the programs by sponsoring regional annual conferences, site visits on an as-needed basis, review of and feedback on plans and applications and access by telephone and Internet. Federal programs will present information and assistance through the Department of Education's homepage on the web.

In conjunction with the Safe and Drug-Free Schools programs, the SEA and local school personnel will develop and support activities that enable children to be responsible and good citizens.

The programs will work with the NDE Staff Development Director, the ESU Staff Development Association members and the staff from the NDE Early Childhood Training Center to include strands in existing professional development activities, gain awareness of current professional development activities and promote those that improve student achievement on the content standards.

At the statewide level. The Statewide School Support System will be the framework for activities in the final consolidated state plan.

Statewide School Support System

Quality Program Reviews

- Integrate federal programs into the:
 - mission of the school district
 - school improvement efforts of the district
 - professional development efforts for all staff
- Promote integration within the programs involved focus on:
 - program participation (access and opportunity)
 - student learning (high academic standards)
 - professional development of all staff
- Were developed by practitioners and are conducted by practitioners with technical assistance from SEA and others
- Reduce paperwork associated with multiple review efforts

Schoolwide Networks

- Support existing schoolwide projects
- Link projects in networks for collaboration and learning
- Assist schools in planning schoolwide projects
- Provide technical assistance from SEA and others
- Encourage more schoolwide projects

Local School Support Teams

- Required in all buildings and districts identified for school improvement or operating a schoolwide project. The team includes the school support team member, teachers, administrators and parents.

Local School Support Team Member

- Identified by the district to serve as the contact person for involvement in the Statewide School Support System
- Must be a member of any schoolwide planning or school improvement team
- Served on the internal team (Option 1) or is the internal coordinator (Option 2) for the Quality Program Review
- Participates in training for internal and external coordinators for Quality Program Review during the year of their review
- Acts as a liaison with other agencies or within the school district in the provision of professional development
- May volunteer to participate in developing processes and materials for the Statewide School Support System

Collaborative Activities for Technical Assistance

- Through Task Force groups of local school support team member volunteers, guidance and assistance will be developed to assist Title programs in implementing the strategies and activities of the consolidated state plan. The following areas have already been identified:
 - Focus on Parent, Family and Caregiver
 - Community and School Partnerships

- Family-centered Services Training Model
- Program Evaluation
- Professional Development (high expectations and honoring diversity)
- Consolidating application and reporting processes
- Citizenship and Responsibility
- Flexible/Extended Time and Locations for Services

Waivers

Procedures and guidance for waivers from requirements in IASA have been developed and disseminated to all local school districts operating Title I Part A programs. In addition, the identification and removal of barriers to school reform on the state level is addressed in the Nebraska 2000: Educate America Act Application for Planning Grant:

Under the coordination of an internal school improvement team, the Department will review its current programs, services and regulations to determine changes needed to support the consensus general educational goals and learner standards and the statewide plan for school improvement developed by the State Panel and approved by the State Board of Education. The Nebraska Department of Education will develop strategies to provide local districts with:

- *Flexibility and options for meeting state regulations;*
- *Waivers and alternatives to current regulations;*
- *Strategies for enhancing local determination.*

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Ongoing Review

Ongoing review of the goals, strategies and activities of this consolidated plan will be implemented at several levels.

At the statewide level, an ongoing review of the progress made in implementing the performance indicators in this plan will be conducted by the IASA Consolidated Advisory Group. This group will be created during the 1996-97 school year to replace the separate program Committees of Practitioners and Advisory Groups for Title I – Parts A, B, C, D and Homeless Education. The IASA Consolidated Advisory Group will include equal representation from all of these groups and programs.

Each program will annually review the impact of the strategies and activities in this plan that are program specific. At the annual meeting of the IASA Consolidated Advisory Group, each program will report on its strategies and activities. In addition, this annual review will examine data relating to the effectiveness of the strategies and activities involving all programs for each of the goals of this consolidated state plan. Some of the activities, such as the Quality Program Reviews, have an evaluation component incorporated into the process.

Each federal program has a required annual evaluation or performance report to gather participant information as well as program effectiveness. Each program will report to the IASA Consolidated Advisory Group on the results of their annual evaluation or performance reviews.

Continuous Improvement

The IASA Consolidated Advisory Group will have, as a primary responsibility, the annual review of the effectiveness of this consolidated state plan in meeting its goals. Through an analysis of the evaluation data from this review, it will make recommendations for revisions and amendments for this consolidated state plan, as needed. In assuming all of the other required responsibilities for each of the separate Committees of Practitioners, the IASA Consolidated Advisory Group will be in a better position to coordinate services, promote collaboration and identify barriers to change and accessibility for the children served through all of these programs.

Continuous improvement in Title I, Part A will involve implementing the school improvement activities defined in Section 1117 of IASA at the SEA, school district and building levels. Each local school district will annually assess the effectiveness of the local programs in meeting their performance standards as established under the Transitional Assessment Plan. In addition, each school district must annually assess the progress of implementing the School District Plan required under Section 1112. The results of this self-assessment are collected in the Annual Performance Report for Title I. A Task Force of local school support team members (see Use of Resources beginning on page 16) will begin, in the 1996-97 school year, to design a rubric and other guidance to help local districts in assessing the various components of their plans.

Program effectiveness and continuous improvement are the focus of the Quality Program Reviews that each school district must conduct at least once during this reauthorization period. School districts have an option to design their Quality Program Review to be an ongoing process and may even elect to conduct a review annually.

MAINTAINING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

This consolidated state plan was developed in conjunction with the Committees of Practitioners of Title I – Parts A, B, C and D; and the Homeless Education Advisory Committee. These groups include representatives from school districts and school administrators from both public and private school systems, school board members, teachers, caregivers, nonprofit agency directors and staff, state agencies, intermediate state agencies, adult educators, parents and the business community. In addition, a focus discussion group with selected members of each advisory group identified the strategies and activities to carry out the goals of the plan. Input into the plan has been provided by staff from other sections in the Nebraska Department of Education including School-to-Work, Vocational and Technical Education, Nebraska 2000: Educate America Act and Special Education. Since the major components of this consolidated state plan were developed in the preliminary plan submitted last year, they have been presented at regional meetings across the state and disseminated to every Title school district for review and comment. The Consolidated State Plan will be made available to the general public through the Nebraska Department of Education home page on the World Wide Web.

The draft of the final consolidated state plan was submitted to the members of the focus discussion group, relevant staff in the Nebraska Department of Education, members of the Committees of Practitioners which include parents, board members, administrators and teachers from public and private schools, homeless liaisons and program directors and selected program participants for review and comments. Oral and written comments will be addressed in changes in the plan. Written comments received, if any, are included in Appendix F.

To maintain public involvement of representatives of all the programs, the IASA Consolidated Advisory Group will meet at least one a year to review the progress of implementing this plan. The IASA Consolidated Advisory Group will be created during the 1996-97 school year to replace the separate program Committees of Practitioners and Advisory Groups for Title I – Parts A, B, C and D and Homeless Education. The IASA Consolidated Advisory Group will include equal representation from all of the groups and programs.

The results of the annual evaluation of progress on the performance indicators developed for each program goal in this plan will be published and disseminated throughout the state in the Annual Performance Report required for Title I as well as in publications and newsletters of the programs involved. The IASA Advisory Group will assist in disseminating the results to other appropriate agencies and service providers. At the SEA level, the Annual Performance Report will be shared with the Nebraska 2000: Educate America Act State Panel.

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

State-Level Activities (Statewide School Support System)

State educational agency activities to meet the goals, strategies and activities of this consolidated plan include contributions from all of the programs involved in administrative staff time for planning and coordinating activities.

Training and coordination activities of the Statewide School Support System will be provided with funds from Title I (Section 1002(f) or reserved under Section 1003(a)), Title III of Goals 2000: Educate America Act, other IASA programs involved and all other programs involved including State and local sources. In Nebraska, the amount of funds provided under Section 1002(f) or reserved under Section 1003(a) equals \$200,000 per year.

The major activities and estimated annual budget totals for the Statewide School Support System are:

Schoolwide Network \$35,000

(regional meetings, statewide conferences, SEA planning and technical assistance, contracted technical assistance, materials)

Quality Program Reviews \$65,000

(training for review coordinators, SEA assistance with local support teams, LEA Title program costs associated with reviews)

Collaborative Activities **\$45,000**

For Technical Assistance

(Task Force member expenses, regional meetings, SEA staff assistance, materials)

SEA Staff Assistance **\$55,000**

(staff time, travel expenses, professional development, contracted services, materials and services)

TOTAL **\$200,000**

Nebraska Department of Education
STATE ADMINISTRATION
§200.60 of the Final Regulations
School Year 1996-1997

Maximum of \$200,000 Reserved for School Improvement

<u>Program</u>	<u>State Allocation</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Basic (Part A)	\$28,535,070	\$170,778
Concentration (Part A)	1,968,990	11,784
Migrant (Part C)	2,667,472	15,964
State Agency N or D (Part D – Subpart 1)	33,417,821	1,474
TOTAL	\$33,417,821	\$200,000

Non-Formula Programs

Title I, Part B – Even Start. Partnerships consisting of both a local educational agency and a nonprofit community-based organization desiring to receive a grant under Title I, Part B of this Act shall submit an application to the State Educational Agency. The Requests for Proposals (RFPs) are sent to all public and private educational agencies, Head Start Community Action Agencies and all known child and family agencies in the state through a direct mailing.

Information about the availability of grants is included in relevant newsletters. All applications which are complete and conform to requirements specified in the Request for Proposals will be subjected to a competitive review and evaluation process against the criteria outlined on a grant rating form. The section and priority points are included on the RFP and are awarded for:

- a. Areas with a high percentage or large number of children and families in need of such service. Need-related indicators include high levels of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, limited English proficiency and school attendance areas eligible for participation in Part A of Title I;
- b. Areas designed as empowerment zones or enterprise communities;
- c. Programs that build on existing services which avoid supplantation.

A total of 100 points are divided between these three areas with 20 priority points available for outstanding efforts in meeting more indicators and in designing collaborative and cooperative efforts. In addition, the selection criteria considered by the review panel for approval include:

- a. Continuity of services for the full period of eligibility;
- b. Integration of program components (early childhood education, adult literacy, parenting education and parent/child interaction) and services including home-based services.
- c. Budgets that reflect costs which are reasonable in relation to expected outcomes and use of currently available resources;
- d. Total costs of the program that reflect the availability of the applicant to demonstrate a local match in accordance with the statute;
- e. Representation of both urban and rural areas of the state;
- f. Application's potential as a model for other programs.

This review shall be conducted by a committee of persons consisting of at least three members including one early childhood professional, one adult education professional and one or more of the following individuals:

- a. A representative of a parent-child educational organization;
- b. A representative of a community-based literacy organization;
- c. A member of a local board of education;
- d. A representative of business and industry with a commitment to education; and/or
- e. An individual who has been involved in the implementation of programs under this title in the state.

The results of the rating committee will be analyzed by the State Educational Agency staff who shall recommend applicants to be funded to the State Board of Education.

Even Start State Level Activities

Five percent (5%) of the grant is reserved annually for State-level activities which are:

- .10 FTE salary for state coordinator
- Training and technical assistance to grantees
- Assistance with local program evaluations

Title I, Part C – Migrant Education. The process of determining the amount each local operating project generates is as follows:

- a. The U.S. Department of Education notifies the SEA of the amount of funds available to the State and the number of migrant student FTE.
- b. The SEA will withhold from 10% or 20% for:
 - Identification and recruitment
 - Delivery of additional health services
 - Staff development
 - Parent involvement
 - Curriculum equipment and materials
 - Pilot projects

Other Discretionary Activities

- PASS – Program Assisted Study Sequence

- Needs assessment
- Evaluations and secondary credit accrual

The SEA will determine a statewide per pupil amount based on the State allocation (minus the set-aside) divided by the number of FTE students generating the funds. Each local project allocation will be determined by multiplying the state per pupil amount by the number of FTEs the migrant students have generated per project. Projects that do not have at least twenty migratory students should be served through cooperative projects with other applications. Note: The state-level administrative functions and local-level administrative funds and descriptions are included in Appendix D.

Title I, Part D – Neglected, Delinquent, At-Risk Children. With funds retained and made available under Section 1204(b), the SEA will award subgrants to local educational agencies with high numbers or percentages of youth residing in locally operated correctional facilities (including county operated) for youth (including facilities involved in day programs).

Eligible Local Educational Agencies. In Nebraska, a local educational agency will be eligible for funds if the number of neglected or delinquent children and youth from this LEA included in the caseload data for the month of October of the preceding year equals or exceeds 15% of the total October caseload for the State.

Distribution of Funds. The total funds available under this Part D, Subpart 2, shall be divided by the October caseload count of the eligible local educational agencies to determine a per child amount. The per child amount multiplied by that local educational agency's number from the October caseload count is the amount available for a subgrant.

Subtitle B of Title VII – Homeless.

- a. The amount of funds used for State activities will be \$50,000 or less. These funds will be used to maintain a State office of Coordinator of Education for Homeless Children and Youth. A description of how these administrative funds will be used is found in the budget narrative. (See Appendix E.)
- b. Funds distributed to school districts are awarded on a competitive basis. RFPs will be made available to all school districts in Nebraska. Any school district that desires to receive a subgrant under this Act shall submit an application/proposal in response to the RFP. All applications are subject to a competitive review process that uses criteria outlined on a grant rating form. This review is conducted by a committee of persons from other State agencies and organizations that provide services to homeless families. The total score must reflect the extent to which the proposed activities will facilitate the enrollment, attendance and educational success of homeless children and youth. The results of the rating committee are analyzed by State Education Agency staff. Grants are awarded on the basis of need, clear description of the program, coordination of services and a cost effective budget. Successful applicants are notified through the issuance of a Grant Award Notification Form 04-042, which sets forth the amount awarded, the effective date of the grant and the budget period for which support will be given. Funds are distributed as reimbursement for expenses documented and submitted on quarterly disbursement and record and report forms.

State Administration

There are no funds consolidated for state administration under Section 14201. The SEA has determined that a majority of its resources come from nonfederal sources.

EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

Equity for all students in terms of access and educational opportunities is a specific goal of High Performance Learning and this consolidated state plan. Within this consolidated state plan, there are goals, strategies and activities designed to address equity in terms of access and achievement outcomes for school districts, schools, parents, families and communities in Goal II. (See pages 11-12 of this plan.)

In recent years, Nebraska has seen a large increase in the number of non-English speaking children, particularly in the small communities of the state. The largest of this population are Hispanic. Many are children of high mobile migrant workers or workers in meatpacking plants. In some communities and schools, these are the first, and sometimes only, non-English speaking students and families.

The Nebraska Department of Education has adopted Rule 16, which requires each school district to adopt a multicultural plan and submit evidence annually on the progress of implementing it. The Title I migrant program has expanded efforts to identify and serve children and families with needs. The Title I Part A programs are working with schools to provide information and assistance in meeting the new requirements of IASA to serve migrant students.

Specific Steps to Address Section 427 or GEPA

1. All programs will promote and provide information to schools and nonprofit agencies on appropriate services and assistance to ESL children and families including:
 - a. Migrant program information is already available in Spanish, Vietnamese and English. Other programs (Title I Part A, Even Start, Homeless) providing services to attempting to provide services to limited English proficient will be encouraged to provide information in the native language of the parents.
 - b. Providing translators for parent-teacher conferences, annual parent meetings and other meetings, as needed.
 - c. The booklet, *LEP Students and Title I: A Guidebook for Educators*, will be distributed to Title I programs reporting services to ESL students.
2. A Nebraska Migrant Resource Center will be available to provide materials and limited training of personnel.
3. Migrant programs will be encouraged to utilize distance learning to expand access to educational opportunities. Migrant programs will be encouraged to work with other states and countries on the acceptance and exchange of secondary school credits.
4. The technical assistance materials developed through the Statewide School Support System will identify “best practices” and models of integrated services. To ensure that these materials appropriately include and address equity issues for ESL children and families, the materials will be reviewed from an equity perspective by trained personnel.

5. The professional development opportunities provided or supported by the programs in this consolidated state plan shall ensure that the challenging academic content and performance standards include all students including those with limited English proficiency.

TITLE I TRANSITIONAL ASSESSMENT PLAN

Addendum to the Nebraska Consolidated State Plan

Content Standards

To ensure that students served in Title I programs are taught the same knowledge and skills and help to the same expectations as all children, each school district must use the academic standards, learner outcomes, or written curriculum used to satisfy the accreditation requirements of Regulations and Procedures for Legal Operation of Schools in Nebraska (Rule 10) for the content standards of their Title I program. School District Plans (NDE 04-012) submitted and approved for the 1996-97 school year contained a description of the content standards for the areas included in the assessment (reading/language arts and math).

Content standards for all schools in the state were accepted by the State Board of Education in draft form in September 1996. These content standards in Reading/Writing, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science were developed by the Nebraska 2000 Goals Panel appointed by the Governor and Commissioner of Education. An initial draft of the content standards was presented, via a statewide teleconference, to the public for input in September 1995. Following further evaluation, additional public engagements and revisions during the spring of 1997, the timeless anticipate finalization by July 1997. Technical assistance and professional development will begin in September 1997, to help all school districts adopt and implement these content standards.

Performance Levels

A waiver is being sought to extend for one year the timelines for completion of the statewide performance level for the content standards. Until performance levels are in place, the title I programs will use the following procedure for the annual assessment of student and building performance.

Student Performance. Student performance will be measured using a combination of the norm-referenced tests required for accreditation (Rule 10) and at least one other indicator of classroom performance that includes complex skills and challenging subject matter. Rule 10 (Section 004.023E3) requires each school district to select and use a standardized norm-referenced achievement test for an annual assessment in at least one grade in each of the following three levels: grades 4-6, grades 7-9 and grades 10-12. All students in the grades selected are tested in all subject areas including reading/language arts and math.

Four levels of performance have been established: pre-emerging, emerging, proficient and advanced. For the norm-referenced tests, the statewide levels of performance are:

- Pre-emerging – 1%-20%
- Emerging – 21%-49%
- Proficient – 50%-74%
- Advanced – 75%-99%

Each school district will establish other indicators of classroom performance that include complex skills and challenging subject matter as:

- The criterion referenced assessments required for accreditation (Rule 10, Section 004.02E4)
- Curriculum-based measurements
- Portfolios
- Other measures of performance

The classroom performance indicators, proposed by each school district, will be reviewed by the SEA in an amendment (Spring 1997) to ensure the use of high-quality assessments and indicators that are based on objective measures. The selection of the classroom performance indicators should be based on districts or schools learning goals and accountability measures for school improvement efforts or schoolwide plans. Each school district will establish pre-emerging, emerging, proficient and advanced levels of performance for these indicators.

Individual student performance indicators will be determined as a combination of the NRT and other indicators of classroom performance. The following chart provides an example for using one indicator of performance. If two or more performance indicators are used, the total of the “points” for classroom performance must equal two (2) for pre-emerging, four (4) for emerging, six (6) for proficient and eight (8) for advanced.

Levels	NRT	Reading Points	Math Points	Classroom Performance (CRT)	CRT Points
Pre-emerging	1-20%	1	1	70 or less	2
Emerging	21-49%	2	2	71-80	4
Proficient	50-74%	3	3	81-90	6
Advanced	75-99%	4	4	91-100	8

Standard criteria for individual student performance have been established for all Title I programs. The NRT and classroom performance “points” are combined to find an individual level of performance according to the following standard criteria:

Standard Criteria Levels for Performance

- Pre-emerging: 1-4 points
- Emerging: 5-8 points
- Proficient: 9-12 points
- Advanced: 13-16 points

Building Performance. Once the performance level of each student has been identified, the building’s performance will be determined by figuring the percentage of the population included in the assessment performing at each of the four levels. To ensure a more appropriate measurement of building performance, each building’s assignment must include a minimum of 25 students if possible.

Adequate Yearly Progress

A statewide goal has been established for determining adequate yearly progress: Within 10 years, all students will be performing at the proficient and advanced levels of performance.

To measure yearly progress, progress goals will be established for each building using baseline data submitted for the 1996-97 school year.

	A	B	C	D	E
Performance Levels	Pre-emerging 1-4	Emerging 5-8	Proficient 9-12	Advanced 13-16	Total
Number	10	12	18	6	46
Percentage	22%	26%	39%	13%	100%

To close the gap between those baseline percentages and the goal of the 100% performing at the proficient and advanced levels, the percentages in columns A, B and C are divided by 10 (for 10 years). This represents the progress goals for the building. In this example, the goals would be to move 2% of the pre-emerging to emerging, 3% of the emerging to proficient and 4% of the proficient to the advanced each year for the next 10 years. Yearly progress will be considered “adequate” if two of the three progress goals are met. The rationale behind the decision to consider reaching two out of three goals as adequate progress was based on the size of the Title I projects and the method of funding special education services in Nebraska.

For the 1995-96 school year, 72% of the Title I projects in Nebraska served 50 or fewer students in the entire district! Many schools will not be able to meet the proposed minimum of 25 students included in the assessment because of the enrollment in the district and the size of the Title I project. Since Title I now uses the testing mandated by Rule 10 for accreditation, not every grade level is tested. Such small numbers of students included in the assessment tend to adversely affect or distort progress determined by percentages.

In Nebraska, the special education services are funded in a reimbursement procedure, which, in effect, sets no limits on the amount of funds that could be spent for a child with an identified disability. This funding procedure does not allow school districts to use Title I funds to supplement special education services. Basing progress only on gains in the lowest two performance levels might not allow a project to show gains if the pre-emerging level remained constant due to the inclusion of students with disabilities. The Task Force did not want to design an assessment that would, in any way, discourage the inclusion of children with special needs from these assessments.

The percentages of the population included in the assessment performing at the proficient and advanced levels in each building will be collected and used as a factor in determining the Distinguished Schools in the state.

Disaggregation of Results

The state of Nebraska does not collect any individual student data (only aggregates or demographic data) or any performance data. There is a long history in this state of opposition to this practice. Technical questions and concerns were expressed by the Title I practitioners assisting with the development of this Transitional Assessment Plan. These included whether performance data should be aggregated and submitted in subgroups. The small size (as noted above) of the population included in the Title I assessments will not yield valid inferences about any subgroup's performance and aggregating statewide would not be appropriate during the transitional assessment period.

The practitioners supported providing guidance to the LEAs with instructions for:

- Locally disaggregating by gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status and receiving services as ESL, special education, migrant or homeless – especially at the pre-emerging and emerging levels of performance;
- Maintaining records to observe changes in these performance levels over time;
- Using the results of the disaggregation to support changes in delivery of services or instructional approaches; and
- Prudent use of disaggregated results to maintain confidentiality, etc.

Accommodations in Assessment

The standardized achievement tests used in this Transitional Assessment Plan are required by Rule 10 for accreditation. Rule 10 does not specifically address accommodations for children with special needs (i.e., ESL, disabilities). In 1995, the state Legislature passed LB 742 which includes a requirement for the Department of Education to develop an accountability system for students with disabilities. In the fall of 1996, the Department of Education expanded this directive to include all children with special needs including children with limited English Proficiency.

As part of this accountability system, two Ad Hoc Committees are in the process of developing technical assistance guidance in the areas of: 1) district-wide assessment (NRT) and 2) regular classroom performance. The technical assistance document will provide guidelines for inclusion of children with special needs, information on research and promising practices, guidance on accommodations and alternate assessment and recommendations and plan for appropriate staff development. The members of the two committees include representatives of the Department of Education (Accreditation, Special Education, Bilingual Education, Title I), Educational Service Unit program directors and staff development personnel, local school district educators and administrators, higher education including the director of the Buros Institute and parents. The timeline for completion of this technical assistance document is summer 1997.

Schools in Need of Improvement

Based on the definition of adequate yearly progress, schools will be identified as being in need of improvement based on meeting their progress goals. Individual progress goals for each building are based on moving, each year for the next 10 years, a percentage of the population

performing at the pre-emerging level to the emerging level, from the emerging level to the proficient and from the proficient to the advanced level. The progress goal percentages are being established using the baseline data of the 1996-97 school year.

The criteria established for adequate yearly progress is meeting two of the three progress goals each year. Schools will be identified as being in need of improvement if adequate yearly progress is not demonstrated for two consecutive years. Failure to meet this criteria for programs serving private school students will result in an identification of the need to review and improve the services to the private school students.

In approximately 80% of the school districts in Nebraska, there is only one building, so school and district are, in effect, one and the same. In these districts, if the school is identified as being in need of improvement, the district is also identified. For school districts with multiple Title I attendance centers, the LEA shall have two options available:

- To examine the progress of the buildings separately and to be identified for school improvement if the majority of the buildings are so identified, or
- To aggregate the numbers of the population included in the assessment to determine progress goals for the district using the same procedure and timelines used for establishing the building progress goals. The decision to use this option would need to be made with the determination of baseline data in the spring of 1997.

To provide continuity in the process of identifying Title I schools in need of improvement during the transition to the new assessment process proposed in this addendum, the SEA has provided several options that support the new, more standardized process and procedure while not requiring additional testing at the local level. All of the options require:

- Building level measurement of progress toward the goal of all students achieving at the proficient and advanced performance levels;
- Assessment in the same subject areas and using the same instruments as last year, if available;
- Combining data with the grade level intervals and within the buildings; and
- Continuing to use the baseline data established in the spring of 1995 until new progress goals are established with the baseline data collected or the 1996-97 school year.

Since both the new and the previous procedure involved standardized achievement test scores, school should be able to determine progress even if the number of students included in the assessment has changed. The SEA will work with districts to address unique situations. Schools and school districts will be identified in the fall of the 1997-98 school year using the information included in this addendum to the Nebraska Consolidated State Plan.

Equitable Access and Participation

Specific Steps to Address Section 427 or GEPA

Assessment of Need and Sources of Information

- The reports from the four school districts reviewed by the Office of Civil Rights during the 1995-96 school year were reviewed to determine general areas of need.
- Barriers and possible actions to address the special needs of ESL teachers, students and other program beneficiaries were identified at a meeting of ESL program directors held on October 8, 1996.
- Information was gathered during on-site assistance visits being provided through the Regional Comprehensive Assistance Center.
- Focus discussion groups provided input on needs and barriers at a regional conference held in South Sioux City in December 1996.

Barriers and Identified Needs (not in priority order)

Barriers to overcome:

- Lack of support and resources to provide sufficient assistance to ESL students
- The mobility of this population
- Lack of understanding by administrators, school board members and communities
- Parents of ESL students need better or more information about the education system and the rights and needs of their children
- Classroom staff not assuming responsibility for LEP children
- Lack of appreciation for diversity

Identified needs:

- Training for classroom and ESL program staff (instructional methods, best practices, second language acquisition)
- Materials for use with LEP children in the regular classroom
- Training for classroom staff to adapt materials for LEP children
- Testing materials (formal and informal assessments)
- Instructional materials
- More trained ESL teachers
- More bilingual paraprofessionals
- More interpreters (especially in the state's smaller communities)
- More early childhood literacy programs
- More parenting programs

Strategies for Addressing Needs

The overall plan is to coordinate services and programs whenever possible to provide activities and support for activities and projects that address the identified barriers and needs and to monitor and evaluate our progress. The following activities are already in progress or are being implemented:

Regional Conferences. The Comprehensive Assistance Center and Title VI and Title VII Bilingual Education of the Nebraska Department of Education have developed a plan to assist

schools in developing their ability to serve ESL students by providing regional and on-site training programs for teachers. An initial opportunity to learn about various instructional programs and participate in planning and training models was held on December 6, 1996. The one-day conference included presentations by the Los Angeles County sheltered English model and multi-age programs. Conference participants identified training issues and needs. Two more regional conferences are planned for the Spring of 1997 that will be supported, in part, by School Improvement funds from the Consolidated State Plan.

Family Video Project. South Sioux City Public Schools' Migrant and Title I programs, the Jones Intercable Company and Iowa Beef Producers (IBP) are jointly creating a family video project. The videos incorporate four languages – Spanish, Vietnamese, Laotian and English – and will be aired twice daily over cable television as well as being available for checkout by parents. The videos will contain activities on topics like reading and home safety that children and parents can do together. The first video entitled “Improve the One-on-One Reading with Your Child” is already in production by IBP Corporate Training video specialists. The videos will be filmed in the South Sioux City Public Schools so parents can watch their children. If this pilot goes well in South Sioux City, IBP will likely incorporate the Family Video Program in other communities around the United States.

Resources to LEA and Agencies. In the fall of 1996, resources boxes of materials were mailed to all school districts and agencies in the state serving Hispanic children according to the latest data available. This was a joint project between the Title VII Bilingual Education and Title I Part A and Part C programs. Each resource box included:

- Booklets
 - LEP and Title I: A Guidebook for Educators from NCBE Resources
 - A New Change: Making the Most of Title I from USDE
 - A Guide to Performance Assessment for Linguistically Diverse Students from EAC-West
- Information
 - A list of resource materials available in Spanish from the Early Childhood Training Center at Educational Service Unit #3.
 - Assessing Language Development in Bilingual Preschool Children
- Parent Booklets
 - Sufficient copies of the Spanish version of the following parent booklets were sent to provide a copy for each family. An English version was also included.
 - You, Your Child and Reading
 - Why Get Involved in Your Child's Education
 - You, Your Child and Self-Esteem

Migrant Resource Center. The Nebraska Migrant Resource Center has been established in a central location of the state through additional 1308 Consortium Funds. The center provides materials and limited training of personnel involved with Migrant programs. Currently, the entire set of PASS (Portable Assisted Study Sequence) materials, early elementary, Balanced Literacy materials from the Wright Group, Literacy Links and other materials from the former national Diffusion Network (no longer funded) are available for checkout for program staff to use.

Read for Joy. As a Nebraska Consolidated State Plan collaborative effort, Early Childhood Training Center is providing training and materials for Read for Joy. Read for Joy is a family literacy project involving schools, local libraries and early childhood programs (Head Start, childcare, NDE-administered early childhood programs). Local teams are trained through family literacy workshops to implement Baby Talk's Read for Joy, which is available in English and Spanish.

Literacy Links and Balanced Literacy. Training in using this research-based literacy instruction approach will be provided to staff in northeast Nebraska through the Educational Service Unit #8 and the Madison Public School's Title I and Migrant programs as a collaborate effort of the Consolidated State Plan. This very rural area of the state has seen some of the highest recent increases in ESL populations of students.